



STATE SENATOR

KEN SIKKEMA

CAPITOL FAX

Friday, February 7, 2003

LAND USE COUNCIL ANNOUNCED

Senate Majority Leader Ken Sikkema (R-Wyoming), House Speaker Rick Johnson (R-LeRoy) and Governor Jennifer Granholm announced a new bipartisan council to study land use and development issues in Michigan this week. Sikkema noted that a five percent increase in the state's population could result in a 20 percent increase in land use. The increased land use would lead to additional environmental concerns, including runoff, urban sprawl, increased solid waste production and the need for more sewer capacity. The Land Use Council has been created to conduct a comprehensive review of Michigan's land use, and is hoped to be as successful as the Great Lakes Conservation Task Force, created by the Republican Caucus' commitment to environmental concerns in 2002.

REPUBLICANS RESPOND TO STATE OF THE STATE

Republican lawmakers responded to Gov. Granholm's State of the State Address by focusing on education, seniors and children's issues. Republican leadership has provided the highest amount ever appropriated for public education in Michigan; passed Proposal A to change the way the state funds education and kept property taxes low for homeowners; made environmental concerns a priority and are working to leave our natural resources in better condition than they are in today; and are dedicated to bringing new job opportunities into our communities to diversify the economy. Despite the tough fiscal times, the Republican-controlled Legislature will make sure schools have the funding they need and put the needs of students and their parents' front and center.

NATIONAL CHILD PASSENGER SAFETY WEEK

Michigan will observe National Child Passenger Safety week February 9-15, emphasizing the proper use of restraints to save the lives of children. The Michigan Department of Community Health statistics list motor vehicle crashes as the number one cause of accidental death for children age zero through fifteen. Parents and childcare providers are being reminded to follow these *4 Steps for Kids* by the Michigan Office of Highway Safety Planning:

- Rear-facing infant seats in the back seat from birth to at least one year old and at least 20 pounds;
- Forward-facing toddler seats in the back seat from age one to about age four and 20 to 40 pounds;
- Booster seats in the back seat from about age four and 40 pounds to at least age eight, unless 4'9";
- Safety belts at age eight or older or taller than 4'9".

All children 12 and under should ride in the back seat. Michigan law requires children under the age of four to be in an approved child safety seat, regardless of the seating position. Children from ages four to 15 must wear a safety belt, including in the back seat. Child Passenger Safety Week is a national effort designed to draw attention to ways to keep young passengers safe in motor vehicles.

The *Capitol Fax* by Senator Ken Sikkema is designed to provide residents and organizations with a timely update of legislative activity in Lansing. If you have any questions, do not wish to receive this fax, or would like to receive this via e-mail, please contact Senator Sikkema's office.

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